

States House of Representatives—a flag that represents slavery, a flag that represents division.

We have come together in this country under a flag that represents unity, one that stands for liberty and justice for all, the flag of the United States of America. This is not that flag.

We confront seminal moments in time.

In South Carolina, the South Carolina Senate and House of Representatives stood tall when confronting a seminal moment in time, and the Confederate battle flag will be removed.

I was so proud to hear a relative, a descendant, of Jefferson Davis take to the floor of the House of Representatives in South Carolina and proclaim that the flag must come down.

Seminal moments in time.

We have our opportunity to do that which is right, to do what Dr. King talked about when he said that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.

We can bend the arc of the moral universe toward justice or we can turn back the clock, understanding that this is a symbol that causes a lot of pain for a lot of people. This symbol would have prevented my having the opportunity to stand here if it had prevailed.

I call upon all people of goodwill to please do the righteous thing, not just the right thing—do the righteous thing.

How can you possibly vote for this after you saw the relatives of the nine who were killed stand in court before a judge and before the person who was the assailant—the person who actually killed people—and say, “I forgive you”? We have forgiven those who have fought to enslave us. We have forgiven.

I forgive you.

How could you possibly now decide that you will legitimize this symbol of hatred, of slavery, of a bygone era of a time when people were not even proclaimed to be human beings in the minds of many?

So this is a great opportunity for this House of Representatives to answer the clarion call of justice and to do as Dr. King indicated, to bend the arc of the moral universe towards justice.

But it is also something else. It is an opportunity to see where we are.

There will be a moment in time beyond this time when someone will look back upon these moments and he will look to see where we stood.

Where did you stand when you had the chance to stand for righteousness? Where were you when you had an opportunity to vote to recognize justice as opposed to the injustice associated with this symbol?

C.A. Tindley was right. So I will leave you with these words:

Harder yet may be the fight; right may often yield to might. Wickedness awhile may seem to reign; Satan's cause may seem to gain. There is a God that rules above with the hand of power and a heart of love. When we are right, He will help us fight.

I stand against this symbol. I stand for the American flag. I stand for justice.

IS ISIS A NATIONAL SECURITY THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today the terrorist army of ISIS is stronger than ever. It maims, rapes, pillages, burns, and beheads in its zeal to commit religious genocide against anyone who disagrees with them.

ISIS controls and manipulates the minds of thousands of foreign fighters, including those who come from the United States. This is done arrogantly through American social media companies.

The U.S.' answer to the ISIS threat? Well, let's see what it is.

Part of the current U.S. strategy is to train foreign mercenaries to fight against ISIS. It has had a yearlong American budget of about \$500 million.

The program is to equally fund equipment and to train these so-called moderates from Syria to fight ISIS. I call them mercenaries.

However, the Secretary of Defense of the United States—Carter—admitted that, even after this 1 year of training, the United States has only trained 60—six, zero—of these moderate Syrian rebels.

If I do my math correctly, Mr. Speaker, we are spending about \$4 million apiece on these 60 fighters to go and fight, supposedly, ISIS.

This is embarrassingly pathetic. The greatest nation that has ever existed sees ISIS as such a threat that we are going to send 60 folks over to try to take care of them.

Ironically, there are more Americans who are fighting with ISIS than we have rebels who have been trained to fight against ISIS.

The United States obviously is not taking ISIS seriously. ISIS even mocks the United States and its 60 fighters on, once again, American social media.

There is more.

The President has recently admitted that the United States really doesn't even have a complete strategy against ISIS. Now, isn't that lovely?

The question is, Mr. Speaker: Is ISIS a national security threat to the United States? That is the question. That is the question that has to be answered by the administration and by Congress, and a decision needs to be made by the administration.

It is time for the administration to pick a horse and ride it. If ISIS is a threat, then we must have a plan to defeat them, then actively implement the plan, and defeat ISIS.

Mr. Speaker, the Commander in Chief needs to lead. He needs to command or ISIS will continue its reign of terror in the Middle East and in other parts of the world.

And that is just the way it is.

THE CONFEDERATE BATTLE FLAG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, if there is any doubt in the mind of any person as to what this Confederate battle flag stands for, I urge people not to listen to me. I urge you to listen to the secessionists themselves.

Here is a quote from the Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina from the Federal Union.

It reads:

This sectional combination for the submersion of the Constitution has been aided in some of the States by elevating to citizenship persons who, by the supreme law of the land, are incapable of becoming citizens, and their votes have been used to inaugurate a new policy hostile to the South and the destruction of its beliefs and safety.

Those persons were Black people. That new policy that was hostile to the South was ending the enslavement of the millions of people based on their race.

Here is a quote from the Vice President of the Confederacy. I think he can speak authoritatively as to what other Confederate flags mean. Vice President Alexander Stephens said:

Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite of the American idea. Its foundations are laid—its cornerstone rests—upon the great truth that the Negro is not equal to the White man, that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition.

That is what the Vice President of the Confederate States said under banners like this one as they were fighting and offering the lives of their own children to maintain slavery.

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This is what the flag represents.

I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, last night the South Carolina House of Representatives finally approved legislation to take down this symbol of hatred and bigotry and the darkest time in our Nation's history.

It is shameful that less than 24 hours after the State of South Carolina took this important step for progress and equality that the United States House of Representatives would consider an amendment that would allow the Confederate flag to be placed in National Park Service cemeteries.

Let's be clear. This amendment is a symbol of hate, and anyone who supports its being in a place of honor is imposing an insult on anyone who has experienced racism in their lives or believes in America's founding principles of equality, justice, and freedom.

150 years ago hundreds of thousands of brave soldiers died to save our Union and to defeat all the ugly beliefs that the Confederate battle flag represents.

Dr. Martin Luther King was fond of saying that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice. Our country has come far since